

THROUGH EDUCATION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

National Environmental Education Strategy

*The beauty of this land prompts me to plead
for its preservation for future generations.
If you love your Homeland,
don't let this plea remain unanswered.*

His Holiness John Paul II
Zamość, June 1999

Poland, Warsaw 2001

ISBN 83-86564-51-2

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Graphic design: Magdalena Słomska

Layout: "BAMKA" Studio Komputerowo - Wydawnicze, Lublin

Print: Wydawnictwo Drukarnia "LIBER", Lublin

This publication is printed on paper manufactured without the use of chlorine.

Additional copies of this publication may be ordered from:

Ministry of the Environment

Bureau of Education and Public Relations

52/54 Wawelska Str.

00-922 Warsaw

Poland

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*Striving to understand and explain nature,
we acquire the most assured understanding of ourselves
- even when we go astray in our learning about nature.*

Adolf Dygasiński

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 19th century, dynamic technological development, combined with the demographic explosion, has resulted in excessive use of the Earth's natural resources, (especially the non-renewable ones as well as in the exploitation of renewable resources) leading to devastation of the environment.

In June 1992, during the "Environment and Development" United Nations Conference in Rio de Janeiro, representatives of 179 countries came to an agreement regarding the need to change the current economic systems and relationships between the environment and human activities. This was deemed necessary for saving our planet and maintaining a secure existence for future generations.

Our awareness of the threats which can be avoided by changing the ways we, humans, act towards ourselves and towards nature makes this document a specific message to the inhabitants of the Republic of Poland. Its purpose is to mobilize them (regardless of sex, age, profession, ethnic background or beliefs) to undertake desired pro-ecological measures.

Nowadays, the need to implement the concept of sustainable development - interpreted as a harmonious combination of human activities aimed at using natural resources in a rational and responsible way in order to preserve them for future generations - is indeed urgent and worth placing beyond and above all dissension.

Every human being uses the environment. We not only obtain resources and energy but also inspiration and experience stemming from nature's beauty and majesty. We also draw from the wealth of the social and cultural environment, created by people and for people. Despite that, few people actually understand how the behaviour, habits, lifestyles, trends, nutrition and leisure preferences of individuals, families, and social groups influence the condition and quality of these environments. Environmental education* aids our understanding of the relationships between the humans, the goods they produce, and nature. This is why it has to embrace everybody without exception. First and foremost are young people who can effectively convey proper pro-ecological measures to older adults.

It is only through the combined effort of all people together that we can impede environmental degradation, improve the quality of our life and health and secure opportuni-

* In the Polish environmental literature, there are two different views regarding the use of terms "ecological education" and "environmental education". In this document, the term "environmental education" will be used.

ties of prosperous life for future generations. This effort needs be undertaken by each person, every day and in every place: at home, at work, or during leisure time.

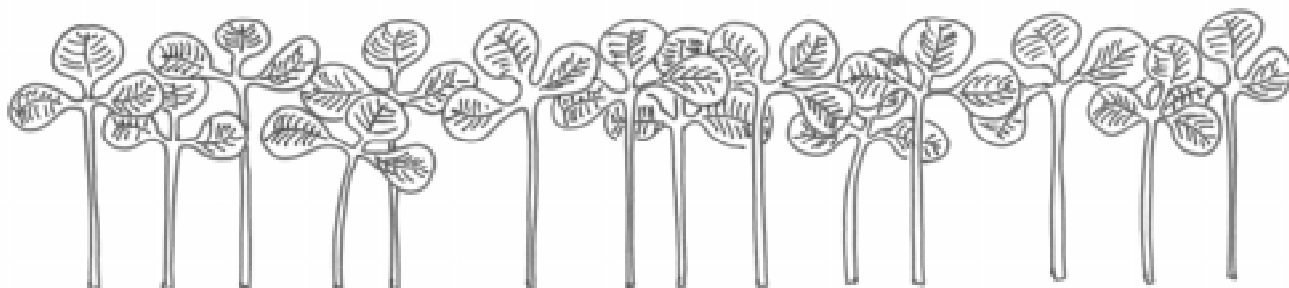
Polish history abounds in examples that demonstrate that during the times of wars, partitions and loss of independence nature served as an ally and refuge for the Poles. It was a haven for our national identity equal to the traditions, culture, religion, and our cherished language.

Poland has its own rich traditions of nature conservation. For almost 100 years, refined means of education about nature, its value, beauty, and the need for an everyday effort to care for the Earth's treasures have existed and still continue. This was done by such entities as the League for Nature Protection, the Polish Tourism Association (PTTK), regional social and cultural associations, scouts, voluntary fire brigades, hunting clubs, athletic clubs and unions, and numerous individual enthusiasts and wardens of nature and the environment.

Many people have been involved in conservation and promotion of the beauty and merits of the Polish environment. Among these were scientists, teachers, priests, artists, athletes, as well as thousands of anonymous foresters, carpenters, millers, pottery makers, blacksmiths, weavers, doctors, tourist guides, librarians, etc. It is because of the almost 100 year tradition of caring for the condition of Polish nature, a tradition that continues today, that there are still new national parks and protected areas being established in Poland, many of them of unique global significance. Also, local educational trails are still being created to acquaint the people with the beauty of nature and local cultural and historic monuments.

The great legacy of our predecessors in promoting the concept of nature protection obliges us, the almost 40-million inhabitants of the centre of Europe, to change our current lifestyle and respect the rules of sustainable development. It will be made possible thanks to the introduction and determined implementation of the National Environmental Education Strategy and the National Environmental Education Programme.

The Editors



I. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

The document entitled “National Environmental Policy of Poland” (1991) stipulated that Poland should follow the path of sustainable development. A similar vision of socio-economic transformations outlining the roles of individual social groups has been reflected in the protocols signed by Poland at the “Environment and Development” United Nations Conference in Rio de Janeiro (1992), most specifically in the Agenda 21 (Global Action Plan). In this document, the environment, economy and society have been identified as mutually related, fundamental elements of sustainable development.

The underlying principle of sustainable development is the interdependence and inter-relatedness of environment protection, economic growth and human development (seen in both individual and social dimensions).

State governments will accept primary responsibility for creating appropriate conditions for implementing the principles of sustainable development. These efforts will be based on strategies, plans and programmes formulated in cooperation with various social groups, non-governmental organizations, etc.

Poland is becoming a country, which respects the need for a rational use of Earth’s resources. This is being done through limiting the use of non-renewable resources and through abandoning tendencies and actions, which impoverish the world’s natural assets. We have to develop our country in the way, which will ensure that future generations will enjoy an environment not worse than it is today. We have to discover the means of co-existing with nature, acknowledging its value and our responsibility for preserving all forms of life on Earth. We should also alter our views on progress and prosperity, putting more attention on people’s spiritual needs. Caring for the quality of life and our surroundings comes with the obligation to address numerous problems associated with urban and industrial development, immoderate use of vehicles and information technology, excessive exploitation of ecosystems, or the search for new energy sources. Another obligation is to eliminate the causes and consequences of famine, intolerance, violence, natural disasters, and negative demographic processes.

Environmental education touches to a large degree upon all the above challenges. In Poland, raising environmental awareness is becoming a pressing need. Simultaneously, it is imperative for securing a rightful position for our country in the United Europe. We should make sure that the improvements in this area take place among both the young generation and among the adults, especially those who make up the workforce and are involved in making important decisions affecting the country and the society.

Environmental education can shape relationships between individuals, societies, and nature. Therefore, it should be quickly and comprehensively introduced in education,

professional advancement, and performance evaluation of people responsible for environmental management. By demonstrating our dependence upon nature, environmental education tells us how to take responsibility for alterations made in the natural environment. Hence, it should be regarded not only as an indispensable element of the whole education system but also as a quintessential component of information policy, economic strategy, and health care.

This type of learning requires a modern education system. Education reform should gradually lead to positive changes in the society's lifestyle. Besides knowledge and experience, humanistic values and attitudes should also be fostered.

Sources of inspiration for environmental education can be multifaceted, from national and cultural traditions to religion to daily routines.

Environmental education is becoming an important element of civic education which is aimed at creating a sensible, enlightened society that accepts the principles of sustainable development, is capable of assessing the state of ecological safety, and can participate in the decision-making processes.

1. GOALS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Education for sustainable development entails the following major objectives:

1. Developing full awareness and stimulating public interest in mutually related economic, social, political and ecological issues.
2. Enabling each human being to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to improve the state of the environment.
3. Creating novel behavioural patterns as well as shaping individual, group, and social attitudes, values and beliefs which carry concerns for the quality of the environment.

Pursuing the above objectives requires:

1. Acknowledging that environmental education is one for the fundamental components of the National Environmental Policy.
2. Incorporating respective elements of environmental education into all areas of public activity, while respecting and taking into account cultural, ethical, and religious values.
3. Securing public access to information about the state of natural environment and about environmental education.
4. Acknowledging that environmental education is a quintessential prerequisite for changing the consumption-oriented character of the society.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AS AN INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT

Environmental education is not just Poland's internal issue; it also has significant international implications. Many conferences devoted to this subject have taken place over the past several years, and specific recommendations have been listed in conference resolutions. The Editors of the National Environmental Education Strategy attempted to include these recommendations in the Strategy's provisions.

The following international meetings regarding environmental education were the most significant:

1. The United Nations "Man and Environment" Conference, Stockholm (1972). The final resolution of this conference addresses the international United Nations agencies, especially the United Nations Education, Science, and Culture Organization (UNESCO). After appropriate consultations, the agencies are supposed to undertake actions in order to establish international programmes of both curriculum-related and extracurricular environmental education. The purpose of such educa-

tion is to teach how to apply simple measures and available resources to protect the environment. In 1975, UNESCO and UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) formulated the International Environmental Education Programme (IEEP).

2. An international conference on environmental education in Tbilisi (1977), organized by UNESCO and UNEP. Its main goal was to share experiences and to sketch directions in which environmental education should progress around the world. The so-called “Tbilisi Declaration” formulated during the conference described the scopes, structures, formats, and needs associated with conducting environmental education at all levels of the education systems.
3. The International Congress of UNESCO-UNEP was organized in 1978 in Moscow. Its objective was to develop guidelines for an international strategy for action regarding environmental education and awareness to be taken in the 1990s.
4. The United Nations “Environment and Development” Conference in Rio de Janeiro (1992). During the conference, the “Rio Declaration” and Agenda 21 were proclaimed among other documents. Much attention in these proclamations was devoted to environmental education. As it was stressed, attempt should be made to develop appropriate educational programmes for children and youth. These programmes should address issues of environment protection and sustainable development, secure suitable educational materials (including audiovisual aids), and establish cooperation between educational institutions and media. The importance of information exchange and collaboration in research and technology was also emphasized. In Agenda 21 (chapter 36, point 36.5 b) it was noted, *In the course of 3 years state governments should make attempts to modernize old or develop new strategies for action. The purpose of these strategies will be to integrate issues of environment protection and economic development, which should become part of educational programmes in every subject and at every level of the education system. The above objectives should be pursued with the collaboration of all social groups; the strategies should specify policies and scopes of involvement, needs and costs, and finally means and plans for their implementation, evaluation, and analysis...* (Appendix IV).
5. A Conference organized by IUCN (the World Conservation Union) and UNESCO in Gland (Switzerland) in November 1994 was devoted to evaluating progress in the development of environmental education strategies in European countries.
6. A Conference organized by UNESCO in June 1995 in Athens on the subject of “environmental education for sustainable development”. The conference participants stressed the need to alter the focus of environmental education activities. Since sustainable development is the ultimate goal of environmental education, it was determined that environmental education should necessarily combine issues pertaining to individuals, societies, environment and economy.
7. A Conference organized by UNESCO, jointly with the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, in Pruhonice (Czech Republic) in November 1995. The main theme of the conference was “Education and public awareness for sustainable development”. The attendants determined the most effective ways of conducting environmental education activities in order to reach the principles of sustainable development.
8. The 4th Session of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (April/May 1996). During the Session, endeavours and accomplishments in raising environmental awareness at the national and international levels were reviewed.

9. A Conference in Aarhus (Denmark) in June 1998, at which the Polish delegation signed the Convention on Access to Information about the State of the Environment.

Our country actively participates in preparations for upcoming international conferences and meetings. Their results may become a source of inspiration for further refinements and improvements in implementing the National Environmental Education Strategy and the National Environmental Education Programme.

3. National Environmental Education Strategy

Following the recommendations listed in Agenda 21, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry signed an agreement of collaboration on environmental education issues (April 1995). The key clause of this agreement regarded plans to work jointly on developing the National Environmental Education Strategy. Both Ministries, with the support from the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, organized a conference in Miedzeszyn (May-June 1995). The event was attended by representatives of the British Environmental Know-How Fund as well as a few dozen other people representing institutions, organizations and groups involved in environmental education in Poland. Six task groups were formed. They represented - respectively - the ministries and central government offices, universities, elementary and secondary schools, non-governmental organizations, media, and local self-government authorities. Each group defined its own objectives and tasks and shared their expectations of other groups.

A team of editors in charge of preparing a preliminary draft of the Strategy was also selected at the conference. In June 1995, the first version was created and sent out to the participants for their review and feedback. After incorporating their comments and suggestions, the second, corrected draft was prepared and subjected to a wide range of consultations among the public and various entities interested in the issue. The document was published in a number of environmental periodicals; also, numerous seminars presenting the Strategy were organized locally.

During the whole year 1996 comments and feedback were collected from all over the country and analysed. This helped the editing team fine-tune and complete the final version of the document. In 1997, the Minister of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry and the Minister of National Education approved the Strategy. Subsequently (1998), the Strategy was subjected to a debate in parliamentary Commissions of Environment Protection (established within the House of Representatives and the Senate) which both approved its contents. In 1999 and 2000, an update and revision of the Strategy took place in order to make it compatible with the new reforms introduced in Poland.

The National Environmental Education Strategy is a document that identifies and prioritises major goals of environmental education. Simultaneously, it points out the appropriate ways for accomplishing these goals. It can be expected that the National Environmental Education Programme, which serves as the implementation programme for the Strategy, will identify educational tasks and objectives as well as entities responsible for their execution.

4. GOALS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

The goals specified in the Strategy pertain to the most important issues and areas of involvement. They will be broken down into concrete tasks listed in the National Environmental Education Programme. They will be also included in local programmes launched to quickly carry out educational activities by entities responsible for implementing educational projects that promote the idea of sustainable development.

The principal goals of the National Environmental Education Strategy are as follows:

1. Promoting the idea of sustainable development in all spheres of human activity, including work and leisure, i.e. subjecting all citizens of the Republic of Poland to continual environmental education.
2. Introducing environmental education as an interdisciplinary form of education at all levels of formal and informal education system.
3. Creating voivodeship, county, and community environmental education programmes serving as extensions of the National Environmental Education Programme. The programmes will be supplemented by suggestions from respective entities carrying out educational activities for local communities.
4. Promoting sound practices in environmental education methodology.



II. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN POLAND

1. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE EDUCATION SYSTEM

1.1. Preschool education

Kindergartens are an important partner for parents in shaping children's personalities. Environmental education should occupy a prominent role in this process.

There are the following main goals of preschool environmental education:

1. Fostering enthusiasm and acquiring skills for observing the natural environment.
2. Developing sensitivity for both natural beauty and environmental degradation.
3. Teaching respect for all living creatures.
4. Influencing lifestyles and environmental awareness of the parents.
5. Developing pro-ecological attitudes and practices in everyday life.

In order to pursue these goals, it is necessary to:

- Expand and enhance curriculum for training preschool educators taking into account specific requirements for conducting environmental education for pre-school children.
- Secure access to attractive educational aids and toys.
- Increase the number of radio and television programmes with environmental contents designed for the youngest audience.

1.2. Elementary and secondary schools

The education system reform (the structural and programmatic reform which encompassed elementary and middle schools) created opportunities for environmental education to assume a rightful position within every school's curriculum. This is based on the following premises:

- Education is mandatory until the age of 18.
- School headmasters gained more autonomy in selecting and adapting educational programmes.
- Middle schools in individual communes and high schools in counties have a potential to become centres of educational activities involving all members of local communities.

An ordinance of 2 February 1999 (Legislative Journal No. 14/99) issued by the Minister of National Education regarding the programmatic principles of general education specified a set of basic objectives for the schools. Some of the objectives include:

1. In the area of education: "developing skills to discern various types of relationships and correlations (cause-effect, functional, temporal and spatial)"

2. In the area of abilities: “effective collaboration in teamwork and group setting, building interpersonal relationships, individual and group decision making, productive effort based on respect for the accepted norms”.
3. In the area of upbringing, the teachers should support the parental role by making the pupils “increasingly independent in their pursuit of virtue in its individual and social dimension. This pursuit should be based on wisely blending the quest for personal gain with the benefits of others, being responsible for oneself with the responsibility for others, and exercising own freedom with the rights of others. Also, an effort should be put in making the pupils develop respect for common wealth as the basis of social coexistence”.

The ordinance stipulates, “Beginning with the second stage of education (i.e. grades 4-6 in elementary schools), besides regular subjects or subject groups, the so-called *educational tracks* will be introduced. They can be interpreted as a combination of knowledge and skills with a significant instructional value. The educational tracks can be employed either within the various existing subjects (subject groups) or as separate classes. *Environmental education* is one of these tracks. The school headmaster is held responsible for adopting material from the educational tracks into the school curriculum. Teachers of all subjects take charge of following the educational tracks and incorporate appropriate elements into their own subject curricula.”

Within the education programmatic base, environmental issues are present to a varying degree in many subjects and subject groups in the form of specific educational goals, school priorities, programme contents, and expected standards of pupil performance.

Utilizing the potential existing within the programmatic base to induce and engrain in the pupils the need to live in accordance with the principles of sustainable development should be the main objective of the whole school community, i.e. school authorities, teachers, pupils and their parents. This objective, among other factors, can be achieved through the following:

- Bringing forth a concept of man who would be aware of own unity with the natural and socio-cultural environment.
- Enhancing the ability to observe the environment and to collect pertinent environmental information.
- Becoming familiar with the principles and interrelationships governing nature and occurring between nature and man.
- Developing the ability to solve problems according to acquired knowledge and an accepted set of values.
- Arousing sensitivity for the natural beauty and environmental harmony.
- Fostering the attitude of respect for life and health, both one’s own and of all other creatures.
- Employing interactive forms of education in the field, e.g. “green schools”.
- Cooperation of teachers in creating a climate conducive for carrying out the principles of environmental education.

The school should:

- Initiate and make use of contacts with the local authorities as well as other representatives of local communities, academic institutions, regional environmental education facilities, and other organizations and agencies.
- Initiate and participate in national and international environmental education programmes.
- Constantly undertake and expand the range of activities aimed at protecting the environment at school and in its surroundings.
- Emphasize a positive role of children in environmental education of adults.
- Conduct environmental education activities in the outdoor setting.

1.3 Academic Institutions

Environmental education in academic institutions should be based on:

1. Presenting environmental issues to future graduates of all universities and schools of higher learning. The scope of this education, its means and possible mandatory nature should be interpreted on an individual basis.
2. Educating specialists for careers in environment protection.
3. Organizing post-graduate studies enhancing knowledge of environment protection.
4. Educating at the academic level within the so-called European, i.e. general, non-professionally-focused programmes.
5. Conducting informal environmental education activities through organizing “open universities” and lectures.

The following actions are necessary for meeting the above objectives:

- Environmental education at the academic level should present the basic knowledge of natural sciences, economics, technology, and humanities, as well as develop environment-friendly attitudes.

There are still too few study programmes which present knowledge in a comprehensive manner, from nature-related aspects through an assortment of social contexts to familiarity with the technologies and techniques applied in environment protection. Consequently, some of the graduates are well oriented in the nature-related aspects in environment protection but lack understanding of the technical, social, and economic parameters. Sometimes it may lead to extreme and radically “protective” attitudes that may even negate the very need for economic development. On the other hand, graduates who are well acquainted with the technical side of environment protection underestimate the natural and social, let alone philosophical, criteria. Comprehensive study programmes are indispensable as a source of teachers and are highly desired for the overall intellectual development.

- Research projects carried out in academic institutions should include aspects of education and methodology of teaching environment protection.

The “delivery-based” teaching methods have been prevalent in the Polish educational traditions. Hence, there is a need to develop and promote the interactive approach that is particularly useful in the field of environmental education. This would require a higher interest in environmental education methodology within many different faculties such as pedagogy, psychology, sociology, and natural sciences. Methodology of research on the changes in public environmental awareness should also be perfected.

- Academic institutions should become centres offering post-graduate programmes and courses for teachers, government employees, journalists, and other people responsible for - and interested in - environmental issues.
- Academic institutions should publish and promote textbooks and other resource materials covering environment protection issues and emphasizing development seen in the social, economic, and cultural context.

On the Polish publishing market, there are a number of titles covering the fundamentals of environment protection. These are, however, low-volume releases and usually very specialized publications. Identifying and selecting the most suitable publications dealing with environmental education should be a permanent feature of the publishing policy.

- Promoting knowledge about environmental issues should be an unquestionable obligation of academic and other research institutions.

Many academic and research institutions regard the promotion of “popular” science as a low-prestige activity. Hence, it receives virtually no support from the academic authorities. Simultaneously, quality of publications and radio and television programmes

raises much concern since they are usually created by non-specialists or indiscriminately replicate foreign templates. High esteem and respect enjoyed by scientists among the public should be taken advantage of in promoting the principles of sustainable development.

- Academic institutions should collaborate with- and extend their support to- any environmental organizations, centres, and movements within their range of influence.

The academic community is regarded as the most independent of all entities involved in environment protection. Due to this fact, non-governmental organizations and informal groups interested in ecology and seeking professional and methodological support should approach it.

There is a possibility to create ad hoc regional academic units supporting environmental movements.

1.4. Adult education

Over the past several years we have observed a growing interest among the adults to acquire additional environmental knowledge within both formal and informal education systems. Open universities, post-graduate studies, courses, trainings, and other attractive forms of spreading knowledge such as contests, exhibitions, promotions, etc. are becoming more and more popular.

Local authorities should play a prominent role in fostering environmental education among the adults. This is a long-range endeavour that should be part of local Agenda 21 programmes. The quickest and most effective way to increase environmental awareness among adult citizens is to involve as many of them as possible in the decision-making process. This would require creating special “procedural avenues” and also some extensive campaigning to inform the public about their right to actively participate, according to the current legislation, in making decisions that have influence on the state of the environment.

Among many possibilities to conduct “unintended” education targeting primarily the adults, a strong priority should be given to enforcing regulations concerning sanitation, solid waste, water and sewage management, or noise abatement. Similarly, other opportunities for implementing and enforcing other European standards (e.g. regarding urban planning, energy conservation, etc.) should be utilized. It is essential to strive to reach a state of both institutional and social disapproval for any individual and group actions having a negative impact on the environment.

The above objectives should be incorporated into scopes of activities of all state and local government authorities. They should be also recommended to other agencies such as police, forestry authorities, or environmental, water, sanitation, urban, customs, transport, and other administrations and inspectorates.

2. SYSTEM OF EXTRACURRICULAR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

2.1. Central government institutions and offices

The supreme legislative bodies, i.e. the House and the Senate which make up the Parliament of the Republic of Poland, both include Commissions for Environment Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry whose scopes of involvement includes environmental education.

So far, environmental education has remained primarily under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (formal education) or the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry (informal education). Fulfilling the Rio de Janeiro resolutions (Agenda 21) requires that environmental education be incorporated into ope-

rations of all central government agencies in line with their own profiles, objectives, and programmes.

Meeting the above goal requires undertaking the following steps:

1. Committee for Sustainable Development and Regional Policy should establish an Environmental Education Commission made up of representatives of central government institutions, non-governmental organizations, churches and religious organizations, as well as foundations and sponsors supporting environmental education.
2. Agencies which coordinate efforts in the field of environmental education (i.e. the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of National Education), in collaboration with the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, should join forces in creating a national environmental education information centre. This would be a unit conducting professional activities regarding information dissemination and promotion of environmental education.
3. Ministries and central government offices should facilitate, within their scope of responsibilities, regular and thorough information updates for the public about the state of the environment. They should also provide access to information that can improve environmental education programmes.
4. Based on international cooperative relationships and the European Union accession procedures, Ministries and central government offices should incorporate, in accordance with their respective profiles, environmental education objectives into future agreements.
5. An important task for government agencies is to promptly arrange a series of trainings regarding European Union requirements with respect to natural resource management, environmental standards, and effective methods of implementing sustainable development principles.

2.2. Environmental education in voivodeships

The principal responsibility of institutions involved in environment protection at the voivodeship (provincial, or regional) level is to undertake and support endeavours that raise environmental awareness through:

1. Collecting, processing, and distributing information about the state of the environment;
2. Conducting professional trainings in the field of law, management, environment protection methodology, urban planning, and financing the environmental sphere;
3. Editorial activity, creating films and other educational materials;
4. Organizing information and educational campaigns.

In order to meet the above objectives, the voivodeship environment protection agencies should:

- Undertake legislative initiatives to assign environmental education responsibilities to local representatives of government administration, and specify funding sources to fulfil these responsibilities.
- Develop voivodeship environmental education programmes based on the National Environmental Education Strategy and National Environmental Education Programme.
- Take actions to maintain the existing and to rationally create new facilities for environmental information and education.
- Promote knowledge about activities, campaigns, and endeavours for active environment protection organized in the voivodeship, region, whole country, and in the world.

- Support environmental education activities carried out by local self-governments, non-governmental organizations, and citizen groups.
- Support the existing and create new environmental education centres of regional and supra-regional character.

2.3. Environmental education in local self-government authorities

Decisions made at the local level directly affect the environment in people's immediate surroundings.

Supporting the idea of self-governance is connected, among other things, with the responsibility for the environment protection and environmental education. This responsibility rests with the local self-government authorities. The self-governments also have the obligation to determine the objectives and methods of environmental education taking into account the characteristics of a given region, local identity and cultural traditions.

Among the three levels of self-government structure in Poland, an especially important (and still growing) role belongs to the counties (*powiat*). There, local citizen initiatives should make a connection with national and European programmes.

In order to make this happen, local self-government authorities should:

- Cooperate with organizations, institutions, churches and formal religious groups, businesses, and representatives of local communities in the development and application of local environmental education programmes stemming from the National Environmental Education Strategy and local Agenda 21.
- Maintain close cooperation with schools and secure proper conditions for conducting environmental education in the school setting.
- Provide the public with access to necessary information required for making decisions regarding environmental management.

2.4. Management of valuable nature areas

In Poland, there are still many areas of high natural and cultural value, such as national and landscape parks, nature reserves, and areas of protected landscape. They are characterized by immense richness of natural qualities and a strong potential for organizing and carrying out environmental education projects.

In many instances environmental education in these areas was already incorporated into an institutional framework. Thus, it became truly broad-ranged due to cooperative agreements between park authorities and regional school boards, regional methodological centres, or regional environmental education centres.

Environmental education should also be introduced and implemented in the so-called Forest Promotional Complexes, botanical gardens, arboretums, parks and other similar places.

In order to develop these forms of activity, it is necessary to:

- Conduct environmental education activities in all environmentally valuable areas with the involvement of local communities.
- Adapt available forms of environmental education to the needs and abilities of target groups of different age and profession.
- Successively expand educational as well as informational and editorial activity.

2.5. Organizers of recreation and tourism

Tourism and leisure activities influence human psychological and physical development and are largely responsible for people's attitudes towards the natural and cultural

environment. Improperly organized mass tourism and recreation has a negative impact on the environment.

It is therefore necessary to extend environmental education programmes to cover both the organizers of tourism and recreation and the recipients of these services. People running tourism businesses in valuable natural areas, as well as organizations focused on eco- and agro tourism constitute a group that is vitally interested in promoting pro-ecological attitudes. Education and information about the environment should also be directed at the inhabitants of such areas.

In order to meet the above objectives, the following actions are needed:

1. Environmental issues should be included in curricula of schools and universities preparing students for careers in tourism as mandatory.
2. Organizing trainings for nature instructors, rangers, and wardens.
3. Elements of environmental education should become an integral part of national and regional tourism development programmes.

2.6. Non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental organizations, including those active in the environmental sphere, have a diverse range of activities and relationships with economy, politics, and culture.

The most common activities conducted by environmental non-governmental organizations include:

- Raising environmental awareness of people involved in social activism,
- Acquainting the public with the basic premises and significance of environmental issues,
- Influencing people and institutions responsible for making decisions regarding environmental management,
- Promoting the humanistic and cultural context of ecology.

In many organizations this type of education goes beyond the scope of “standard” environmental education because it also includes religious, philosophical, ethical, medical, social, political, legal, and economic aspects.

In order to strengthen the role and importance of environmental organizations in the area of environmental education, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Major goals of non-governmental environmental organizations regarding environmental education should be compatible with the priorities outlined in the National Environmental Education Strategy.
- Environmental education curricula of non-governmental environmental organizations that implement the National Environmental Education Programme should take into account current needs of the local communities and should lead to the integration of pro-environmental measures.
- One of the priorities of non-governmental environmental organizations should be to collect, store, and disseminate reliable data necessary for increasing environmental awareness and active participation in pro-environmental activities.
- Local groups of formal or informal nature should assume a more prominent role on the environmental education arena. Those groups should support such causes as environmental harmony or cultural identity and its legacy, as well as suggest innovative, region-specific and sustainable development-compatible solutions.

2.7. Churches and religious organizations

Education for sustainable development can lead to permanent changes in public awareness when it is augmented by religious and cultural values. Churches and religious organizations become increasingly interested in raising environmental awareness among the public.

This trend is demonstrated through:

- Organizing meetings, seminars, and conferences,
- Publishing books, brochures, and other resource materials for priests, catechism teachers, and parishioners,
- Publishing articles in religious periodicals,
- Broadcasting radio and television programmes,
- Sermons, announcements, and notes for the congregation members,
- Formal studies and operations of religious environmental education centres.

The effectiveness of the above activities will depend on:

- Including selected principles and topics contained in the National Environmental Education Strategy in the teachings and philosophy of individual Churches and religious organizations.
- Inducing environmental education awareness of congregation members through teachings, sermons, and catechism classes - but also through proper environmental management on church properties.
- Collaboration of Churches and religious organizations with institutions and organizations active in the field of environmental education.
- Establishing a closer cooperation between Christian Churches and pro-environmental religious organizations in Europe.

2.8 Environmental education in the workplace

The vast majority of people pursuing professional careers have a direct influence on the condition of the environment. This is a result of more or less intentional decisions made and executed on every job. Therefore, fulfilling the principles of sustainable development depends to a large degree on concrete actions performed in the workplace.

A new and important educational challenge is the changing role of the Polish agriculture and Polish farmers in the process of accession to the European Union. These changes cannot take place without increased environmental awareness among the farmers and without preserving the good traditions of eco-friendly Polish farming.

The effectiveness of these undertakings is contingent upon fulfilling the following preconditions:

- Managers, specialized employee groups, and trade unions should promote environmental knowledge in the workplace. The process should include staff development programmes with aspects of environmental education relevant to the profile of a given agency or company.
- Training programmes of the State Labour Inspection and its subsidiaries should take into account the principles of the National Environmental Education Strategy.
- Occupational safety and hygiene (BHP) trainings should involve issues of how the company's operations may affect local environment and public health.
- All promotional ventures should advertise environment-friendly technologies and practices.
- Organizations and institutions supporting the agricultural and farming sector should promote activities that preserve biodiversity on arable lands.

2.9. Environmental education in the family

The family is the basic social unit that influences human personality and attitudes. Very strong ties and relationships present in the Polish families can prove extremely useful in conducting effective environmental education. In the family environment the first impressions of the world are shaped, viewpoints and experiences shared. The fam-

ily should be a place in which one implements, tests, and verifies environmental knowledge acquired by all its members.

Because of this:

- The National Environmental Education Programme should contain a complementary set of objectives to be pursued by various entities involved in family environmental education.
- Among specific tasks concerning family education, the following activities should be taken into account:
 - Developing individual responsibility for own life and the state of the environment,
 - Promoting positive attitudes towards the natural, social, and cultural environment,
 - Raising awareness about the commitment and responsibility each family has towards next generations.
- Environmental education in the family setting should advocate new lifestyles considering the role of recreation, tourism and leisure, while maintaining and preserving the condition of the natural environment.
- Environmental education at home should meet specific needs of special-care family members.

2.10. Media

Surveys of the state of public awareness have demonstrated that media have a significant effect on the level of knowledge about the environment. Television, radio, and newspapers are the most frequently listed sources of information about environmental issues. It can be expected that local media will play an increasingly important role in informing and educating the public.

There is a direct relationship between the level of public knowledge and the way environmental problems are presented by the media. The means of conveying information by the media gradually changes. Single-topic discussion programmes, popular science TV documentaries about the environment, or the so-called “public advertisements” encouraging pro-environmental practices- have all gained importance.

Article 2, Section 1, Point 6 of the Radio and Television Broadcasting Act of 29 December 1992 stipulates that one of the goals of public radio and television is to support art, literature, research, and education.

Points 3, 4, 5, and 6 of Section 2 of the same Article underline the role of public media in shaping people’s attitudes, facilitating citizen participation in public actions and events. Media can impact on various activities for the advancement of culture, science, or education.

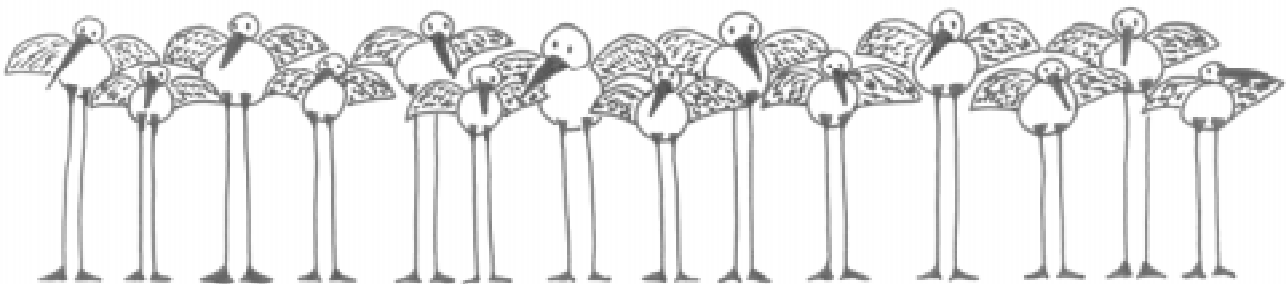
Simultaneously, Article 74, Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the current Polish Constitution enacted in 1997 contains a general scope of responsibilities of government authorities towards the citizens with respect to environment protection. The Article also stipulates that every citizen has the right to receive information about the state of the environment and its protection.

Consequently, pursuing the above objectives by public television must include aspects of environmental education in its broad sense.

Therefore, media should strive to:

- Present, in a thorough and non-sensational way, information about the state of the environment and positive examples of actions undertaken for its protection, as well as show consequences (incl. financial ones) of planned and unplanned activities carried out in the environment.

- Promote environment-friendly lifestyles and practices.
- Establish close cooperation with institutions and organizations involved in environment protection in order to collect information and to take advantage of activities conducted by these entities.
- Make efforts to eliminate the commercial aspects of media when promoting environmental knowledge.
- Limit advertising of the consumption-oriented model of civilization.



III. PROVISIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

The major precondition for the implementation of the National Environmental Education Strategy is the overwhelming acceptance of the message and principles contained therein.

Effective implementation of the guidelines specified in the Strategy will be made possible through:

1. Adopting the Strategy as the document specifying the course of development of environmental education in Poland with the involvement of respective state authorities.
2. Spreading and promoting the principles of the National Environmental Education Strategy.
3. Securing financial resources necessary for preparing and implementing the National, regional, and state sector-specific environmental education programmes.
4. Establishing the Environmental Education Commission under the auspices of the Committee for Sustainable Development and Regional Policy. The responsibilities of the Commission would include initiating activities congruent with the Strategy guidelines, preparing periodic reports, comprehensive evaluations, and identifying needs for updating the Strategy.
5. Creating a national environmental education information centre which would be a unit conducting professional activities regarding information dissemination and promotion of environmental education*.

...To those who have been bestowed with the responsibility for this country [...] let them not forget about the obligation of protecting it from environmental destruction...

His Holiness John Paul II
Zamość, 12 June 1999

* On 20 October 1998 the Executive Board of the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management decided to establish, within its own structures, the Central Environmental Education Information Unit. Eventually, the name of the unit was changed to the Environmental Education Information Centre.

APPENDIX

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE POLISH LEGISLATION AND IN OFFICIAL STATE AND INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

I. LEGAL ACTS

Constitution of the Republic of Poland

Article 74

1. State authorities implement policies that ensure environmental safety for current and future generations.
2. Environment protection is the responsibility of state authorities.
3. Everybody has the right to be informed about the state of the environment and its protection.
4. State authorities support citizen involvement in protecting and improving the condition of the environment.

Environment protection and management act of 31 January 1980

Chapter 2. Creating conditions for environment protection

Article 10.1. Academic institutions, scientific institutes, and other organized units conducting research activity are involved in creating conditions for environment protection. This is done by:

- Conducting research which is closely associated with the environment protection principles,
- Carrying out investigations and experiments to develop pro-environmental technologies and industrial goods,

- Collaborating on the issue of technological development taking into account the needs of the environment,
- Promoting national and foreign scientific and technological accomplishments and their practical application in the environmental sphere.

Article 10.2. Agencies and institutions coordinating and supervising research, as well as universities and research institutes whose statutory activities include topics and disciplines associated with environment protection, are obliged to incorporate these aspects in their current and planned activities.

Article 11.1. Educational institutions of all levels are obligated to consider environment protection issues in conducting educational activities and include these issues into their curricula.

Article 11.2. The obligation mentioned in Section 1 also pertains to agencies conducting staff development trainings.

Article 12. Media are obligated to foster among the public proper attitudes towards environment protection and to promote pro-environmental practices in their programmes and publications.

Education system act of 7 September 1991

Chapter 1. General regulations

Article 1. Education system primarily ensures:

11. Spreading knowledge about the environment among children and youth, and fostering proper attitudes towards environment protection.

Environment protection act of 16 October 1991

Chapter 1. General regulations

Article 3. Nature protection is the obligation of every citizen, as well as state authorities, local governments, and other agencies, individuals and legal entities conducting activities affecting nature.

Article 5.1. Promotion of nature protection issues is the responsibility of state authorities and local governments, scientific and educational institutions, and public media.

Article 5.2. Schools of all levels are obliged to incorporate nature protection issues into their curricula.

II. STATE DOCUMENTS

National Environmental Policy, May 1991

It is acknowledged that environmental education should not be conducted solely through institutional introduction of yet another subject into the school curriculum. The National Environmental Policy will manifest itself in supporting unconventional (but still appro-

priate), informative and educational activities designed for various social groups. This is admittedly one of the most effective ways to influence environmental awareness among the public. Increased environmental awareness is the foundation of public acceptance and thus successful implementation of sustainable development principles.

The main purpose of environmental education will be to affect people's attitudes towards their environment. This will be achieved through forming appropriate relationships between humans, nature, and environment, as well as through increasing human awareness about these matters.

The primary goal will be achieved through clarifying and improving knowledge about relationships between man, nature, and environment, how the environment functions, what are the threats posed by actions of individuals, groups, and businesses, and what are the long-range effects of such actions. Encouraged pro-environmental practices should be primarily based on knowledge about how to avoid those threats and how to eliminate their negative impacts.

Inspiring sensitivity for environmental problems and encouraging environment protection practices should become a significant aspect of shaping pro-environmental attitudes. Environmental education has to become a part of the overall process of learning. Positive and responsible attitude towards nature should be rooted in every person's set of values.

An environmental education programme targeting a broad spectrum of the society and utilising diverse methods and approaches will be formulated.

Within the system of formal education:

- Environmental education will be introduced at all levels of education and in various types of schools. This will be achieved through incorporating environmental topics into the curricula of all mandatory subjects as well as into gradually developed system of elective courses.
- Schools with environmental profile will receive programmatic and financial support through target funds. These schools may employ their own educational programmes, post-matriculation and supra secondary courses yielding environmental specialists.
- Teacher training programmes in environment protection will be implemented by means of integrating and supporting various forms of this type of education.

Within the system of informal education:

- Collaboration with environmental non-governmental organizations and institutions involved in environmental education;
- Collaboration with international organizations in the field of environmental education;
- Collaboration with environmental non-governmental organizations to identify and support means and methods of raising public awareness and public involvement in environment protection;
- Supporting initiatives that foster environmental awareness by organizing and attending environmental scientific conferences, seminars, trainings, courses, competitions and arts events that promote environmental and conservation issues.
- Implementing teacher-training programmes on environment protection through cooperation and support (programmatic, organizational, financial).
- In collaboration with various agencies, initiating staff development activities for professionals (including state and local government employees and journalists) regarding domestic and foreign environment protection issues; also, controlling

the programmatic contents of such trainings and collaborating with training centres;

- Developing a network of local environmental education centres (e.g. in national parks) equipped in appropriate resources, textbooks, films, and other educational aids that enable direct access to knowledge about the environment.
- Input in planning and creating of radio and television programmes (e.g. documentaries, shows, news, and other broadcasts) in cooperation with TV and radio broadcasters, press publishers and editors, film producers, artistic agencies, etc.
- Establishing cooperative links with churches and religious organizations in order to promote pro-environmental attitudes.
- Undertake organizational efforts to improve and spread environmental education by establishing the National Environmental Education Centre. The Centre's role would be to inform about, initiate, and coordinate environmental education activities.

National Environmental Policy II, June 2000

3.7. Biological and landscape diversity

112. Activities aimed at the conservation of biodiversity on a national level should be directed towards improvement of **natural heritage preservation** through: (...)

- spreading of environmental knowledge, problems related to the protection of ecosystems, natural habitats and species, landscape, shaping of behaviours favourable to biodiversity protection;
- gaining public interest and involvement of general public and individual social groups into activities concerned with nature conservation;
- preparation of suitable educational programmes and creation of conditions for their implementation; (...)

114. Specific activities undertaken at various levels and ministers in a **medium-term** perspective (by 2010) should encompass: (...)

(c) in the area of education

- activities towards a development of environmental awareness and shaping of opinion of the public and local authorities; promotion of topics related to biological diversity through centrally and locally organised trainings and information campaigns; improvement of social communication in understanding goals and consequences of biodiversity protection;
- promotion of rational use of biological resources and practices of cautions and sound management that will not damage natural resources more than it is absolutely necessary, in accordance with sustainable development principles, stressing local benefits arising from the preservation of biological and landscape diversity;
- exchange of information concerning biodiversity protection and an international scientific cooperation.

4.6. Access to information, public participation and environmental education

163. Non-governmental environmental organizations shall be supported, also financially, which perform educational, informative and consulting activities. The same pertains to organizations co-operating in the control and execution of environmental rules and in informing the system of environmental management. Promotion and education will be organized concerning access to information and public participation in environmental protection. Actions based on the "National Strategy for Environmental Education" will be intensified.

III. INTER-AGENCY AGREEMENTS

Agreement of 19 April 1995 between the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry

We express a congruent opinion that there is a need to develop and implement a national environmental education strategy. Both Ministries will assume the coordinating role in this endeavour that will be completed within the next 2-3 years.

The Minister of National Education will take responsibility for the formal and legal aspects of developing and introducing into the school system of new programmes that will ensure an effective implementation of environmental education principles.

The Minister of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry commits to co-financing the development of environmental education curricula, publication of new textbooks, and training teachers within the parameters set forth in a separate protocol.

The Minister of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry commits to rendering assistance in cases when soliciting financial support from the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management will be necessary.

Inter-Ministerial Panel on Preparation of the Educational Programme: “Aware Landscape Formation and Historic Landscape Conservation”, 27 May 1998

1. In the face of necessity of ecological awareness increase, and increase of social and public care for material and intellectual values of environment and cultural landscape, the Prime Minister, on the strength of his Order no. 34 of May 20, 1998, has created the Inter-Ministerial Panel for urgent preparation (not later than June 30, 1999) appropriate educational programme: “Aware Formation of Landscape and Historic Landscape Conservation”.

2. The Panel, which leadership is Minister of Culture and Art consists of representatives of Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Culture and Art, the Office for Housing and Towns Development and Chief Monuments Conservator. This body can also use a support of other persons and institutions.

3. The Educational Programme is not aimed at change or decrease of needs for measures, which are undertaken by the Government and administration, aimed at nature conservation and our cultural resources conservation. The Programme is to support them by indication of different material and intellectual values of our natural and cultural heritage, as well as opening public eyes on close connections of man with environment and surroundings and necessity of more harmonised, sustainable and pro-ecological country development, need for better planning and more appropriate spatial-architectonic order, creation more environmentally friendly and our cultural heritage friendly economy, not only agriculture.

4. Authors of the Programme are aware that social and economic life needs different changes and natural or cultural landscape also changes. Nevertheless public should be permanently informed that it should proceed without breaking of cultural continuity, without polluting and damaging of environment, as well as without biological and cultural degradation of our surroundings and landscape.

5. Necessity of aware formation, care and “cultivation” of landscape will be emphasised in the Programme, because only such approach and well-considered activities of

authorities, public and economic entities can simplify conservation of cultural and natural heritage on a given area. Appropriate policy of governmental administration for nature and culture conservation is and will be helpful in aware formation of landscapes and their appropriate use by local and regional communities.

6. In consideration of its rich educational contents, the Programme should become not only an important part of cultural and social policy of the country but also part of policy all ministries which take part in its creation and preparation, and then will participate in its implementation. It is clear that radio, television and other media have to be included, in appropriate scope, into its implementation.

7. In face of common and different connections of society with landscape, not only local one, this educational undertaking should be multidimensional instrument of social influence, from countrywide till regional and local level and, in this way the Programme will be connected with the present structural reorganisation of the country. It should support development of local communities and inform them that such activities as stimulation of cultural tourism both as attractive form of cognition and popularisation of national and local culture and nature values, and additional interest which can serve a purpose of social and economic activation of inhabitants.

8. The Programme is addressed , in its informative and educational context, to wide circles of public, in particular to youth, organisers of social and public life, personnel of local governmental and municipal administration, and, in the field of occupational education and increase of qualifications - to school and academic teachers and monuments conservation services and nature conservation services.

9. The Programme should enable development of architectonic-landscape and conservation faculties in high schools, contribute to rebirth of regional architecture, horticultural art and other vanishing professions, as well as it should made a reform in the field of training of monuments and nature conservation services personnel aimed at preparation them for integrated natural-cultural conservation and care for our landscapes. Both conservation of cultural values can be implemented in its natural environment and nature can be conserved in cultural landscape.

10. In order to appropriate preparation of the Programme, the Panel will made a review of current state of education in the fields connected with integrally understood landscape, and made analyse of existing legal regulations and administrative practices. The Panel will prepare propositions of subsidiary undertakings, including projects of amendments of legal and financial regulations aimed at implementation of the Programme and its proper work.

11. It should be taken into consideration, that such interdisciplinary Programme can be implemented by steps, and measurable social effects can be obtained after few years from the beginning of teacher's and professorial personnel training, organizing of specialistic schools based on secondary comprehensive schools, creation of appropriate faculties at universities and postgraduate lessons and practices. This is a reason for which undertaking of appropriate activities by the Panel should take part as soon as possible. These activities should be parallel accompanied by various educational actions as well as preliminary educational undertakings.

12. The Programme will be implemented during the period of our intensive negotiations regarding full membership of European Union. Therefore it should stress an importance of nature and historic landscape conservation for our national consciousness, preservation and bequeathing native traditions, which, together with our natural and cultural resources, will constitute our contribution to common European and world heritage.

Suggested by: Mrs. Joanna Wnuk-Nazarowa - Minister of Culture and Art and Mr. Jan Szyszko - Minister of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry with

support of Mr. Mirosław Handke - Minister of National Education and Mr. Sławomir Najmiegier - President of the Office for Housing and Towns Development.

IV. INTERNATIONAL PROTOCOLS

Agenda 21

Chapter 36, point 36.5.b. Promoting education, public awareness, and training for sustainable development and environment protection

In the course of 3 years state governments should make attempts to modernize old or develop new strategies for action. The purpose of these strategies will be to integrate issues of environment protection and economic development, which should become part of educational programmes in every subject and at every level of the education system. The above objectives should be pursued with the collaboration of all social groups; the strategies should specify policies and scopes of involvement, needs and costs, and finally means and plans for their implementation, evaluation, and analysis. Current curricula should be thoroughly reviewed and updated to ensure multidisciplinary education about environment protection and sustainable development, as well as about social, cultural, and demographic issues. Particular attention should be put on public needs and diverse educational systems, including those, which touch upon delicate social and cultural matters.

United Nations convention on climate change

Article 6. Education, training, and public awareness

Fulfilling the commitment set forth in Article 1, Section 1, the signatories will:

- a. Support and facilitate the following at the national or, when appropriate, subregional level, according to state laws and regulations, and within potential abilities:
 1. Development and implementation of educational programmes and advancing public awareness about climate changes and their consequences;
 2. General access to information about climate changes and their consequences;
 3. Extensive involvement in projects regarding climate changes and their consequences and eliciting appropriate public reactions to these issues;
 4. Training of research, technical, and management personnel.
- b. Support and collaborate on the following at the international level and, when applicable, with the involvement of existing agencies:
 1. Development and exchange of resource materials used for educating and raising public awareness about climate changes and their consequences;
 2. Taking into account reinforcing national institutions and staff exchange and support, developing and implementing educational and training programmes to train specialists in the field of climate change who are particularly needed in developing countries.

Convention on preserving biodiversity

Article 13. Raising public knowledge and awareness

The agreeing parties will:

- a. Promote the importance and need to take actions necessary for preserving biodiversity, raising public awareness through media, and for incorporating these issues into school curricula.

- b. Collaborate, when needed, with other countries and international organizations on the development of educational programmes and on raising public awareness about preserving biodiversity and moderate use of its constituents.

Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters

The Parties to this Convention,

Recognizing that adequate protection of the environment is essential to human well-being and the enjoyment of basic human rights, including the right to life itself,

Recognizing also that every person has the right to live in an environment adequate to his or her health and well-being, and the duty, both individually and in association with others, to protect and improve the environment for the benefit of present and future generations,

Recognizing that, in the field of the environment, improved access to information and public participation in decision-making enhance the quality and the implementation of decisions, contribute to public awareness of environmental issues, give the public the opportunity to express its concerns and enable public authorities to take due account of such concerns,

Desiring to promote environmental education to further the understanding of the environment and sustainable development and to encourage widespread public awareness of, and participation in, decisions affecting the environment and sustainable development,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 3

General Provisions

3. Each Party shall promote environmental education and environmental awareness among the public, especially on how to obtain access to information, to participate in decision-making and to obtain access to justice in environmental matters.

